

claims with their insurance companies or working with Federal, State and local agencies to address their disaster-related needs.

However, while 3,045 licensed child care centers were eligible, just 10 centers in Louisiana and only one in Mississippi received Federal assistance. There were 1,690 eligible centers in my home state of Mississippi alone. I understand that numerous centers are still going through the appeals process with FEMA and have yet to rebuild and reopen.

I introduced this legislation to amend the Stafford Act to ensure that emergency child care is recognized as a "critical service" in the aftermath of a terrorist attack, major disaster or other emergency.

While provisions of the Stafford Act provide assistance to private nonprofit facilities that provide critical services, emergency child care is not listed as one. Passage of this measure will designate emergency child care as a critical service and let families know that in the time of a disaster, the need for childcare will not be forgotten.

In an effort to rebuild and restore child care operations in my home State of Mississippi, the Mississippi Early Care and Education Infrastructure Initiative was formed by Mississippi State University in partnership with Chevron, Save the Children, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The goals of the Initiative were to quickly reopen the thousands of child care centers damaged or destroyed by the hurricanes, to retrain staff and upgrade curriculum materials and play equipment, and to prepare for future emergencies.

Further, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services approved child care waivers for \$60 million so that parents were provided with vouchers for 60 days for much-needed child care services while working or looking for work. These waivers lifted Federal requirements for State matching funds and went directly to the States to administer their Child Care and Development Funds. There was a huge bottleneck with this process and numerous centers and parents were unaware of these resources. Further, many parents that received these vouchers were unable to find operational child care facilities.

I applaud the efforts of the Initiative fanned in Mississippi and am thankful that the Department of Health and Human Services responded quickly to the affected states. June 1st marks the beginning of 2007 hurricane season. We must be sure to let families know that the Federal Government is doing its part to ensure that critical services are available in the event of another large-scale disaster or even a major terrorist attack. Enactment of the Emergency Child Care Services Act is the way to do it.

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1427) to reform the regulation of certain housing-related

Government-sponsored enterprises, and for other purposes, with Mr. PASTOR (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 1427, the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act, and commend Chairman BARNEY FRANK for his hard work to develop a comprehensive, bipartisan government-sponsored enterprise, GSE, reform bill.

This legislation will restore accountability by strengthening federal oversight of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the 12 Federal Home Loan Banks. It will consolidate regulation of the housing GSEs under the Federal Housing Finance Agency, a new, independent agency. The Federal Housing Finance Agency will be authorized to adjust the enterprises' risk-based capitol and even limit the size of their portfolios for a limited time, if necessary to ensure their safety and soundness.

H.R. 1427 also establishes an Affordable Housing Fund, which will be financed by a required contribution from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac of only 0.012 percent of their total mortgage portfolio each year. The fund will annually contribute approximately \$500 million to the construction, maintenance, and preservation of affordable housing.

The Affordable Housing Fund is an important step toward ensuring access to safe, affordable housing for all Americans, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic region. In its first year, the funds will be used entirely to build much-needed homes throughout the region devastated by Hurricane Katrina. In subsequent years, the grants from the fund will be administered by states, and Minnesota will receive an estimated \$6.5 million each year to build affordable housing for the most vulnerable families.

I applaud Chairman FRANK for bringing forward a comprehensive and fair bill. I am particularly pleased that in contrast to last years' efforts, H.R. 1427 does not include language restricting faith-based and nonprofit organizations from receiving affordable housing funds for participation in nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote activities. Congress should put the needs of American families before political ideology, and this bill does just that.

The Federal Housing Finance Reform Act has the support of the Bush Administration, as well as Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, numerous other financial institutions, lenders, realtors, housing advocates, and many other housing organizations.

Access to safe and stable housing is a basic need and one that no individual or family should ever be denied. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 1427.

A TRIBUTE TO FRANCIS JOHNSON

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Francis "Frank" Johnson's accomplished career and influential musical legacy. Born in 1792 in Philadelphia, Johnson was well known as a professional musician by age 20. Overcoming the barriers of racism, Johnson achieved in-

credible success even in the face of such racial strife, composing over 300 pieces of music. Further, in a time when professional musicians were a rarity in the United States, Johnson established a career with incredible variety and importance that has had an impact on countless modern musicians.

Johnson trained with Richard Wills, the West Point band leader, and quickly mastered many instruments like the keyed bugle. He published his first composition, "A Collection of New Cotillions," in 1818, and soon became one of Philadelphia's premier musicians. Johnson's vast musical accomplishments were noted by author Robert Walsh in 1819, commenting: "In fine, he is the leader of the band at all balls, public and private; sole director of all serenades, acceptable and unacceptable; inventor-general of cotillions; to which add, a remarkable taste in distorting a sentimental, simple, and beautiful song, into a reel, jig or country-dance."

It is an honor to recognize a figure who was able to overcome incredible hardships to create a legacy that has affected countless generations. I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending Francis Johnson for his renowned musical achievements and lasting influence.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM AND ESTHER DAVIDOWITZ AS THEY ARE HONORED AS "PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY" IN WILKES-BARRE PENNSYLVANIA

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to William and Esther Davidowitz who are being honored as Amudei Tzibur, or Pillars of the Community, by Temple Israel in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz will be formally honored at Temple Israel's annual dinner to be held Wednesday, June 13, 2007.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz are regarded as exemplary role models due to their achievements in both the Jewish community and the greater Wyoming Valley community.

Born in Brooklyn, New York and raised in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, Mr. Davidowitz served in the United States Army during World War II and later attended Penn State University where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He joined his family's shoe business in Hazleton and later moved to the Wilkes-Barre area to establish the Penn Footwear Company in Nanticoke.

Mr. Davidowitz is a past chairman of the United Jewish Appeal and he remains active in the Jewish Federation and he is a trustee at the Jewish Community Center in Wilkes-Barre. He has served on the boards of Temple Israel, the Jewish Community Center, Fox Hill Country Club and Penn State University, Lehman Campus.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz were instrumental in the creation and dedication of many community projects including the United Hebrew Institute Art Room, the Davidowitz Lounge at the Jewish Community Center and the building